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Human Rights Council
Thirty-second session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan concerning the use of a white phosphorus bomb by the armed forces of Armenia against civilians and civilian objects of Azerbaijan (see annex).

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(Signed) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

GE.16-12656(E)

1612656

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Statement dated 17 May 2016 on the use of white phosphorus bomb by the armed forces of Armenia against civilians and civilian objects of Azerbaijan

In recent escalations and offensive actions starting from April 2, 2016, armed forces of Armenia among numerous instances of deliberate shelling on civilians and civilian objects of Azerbaijan with artillery and large-caliber weapons have also used shells containing chemicals such as white phosphorus.

One of such projectiles was shelled on Askipara village of the Tartar region of Azerbaijan, coincidentally it missed its prime target and landed on the cultivated cotton field and was found as an unexploded ordinance by Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) on May 10. If landed on the densely populated part of Askipara village, the projectile would have inflicted serious casualties and injuries among the civilians.

Military attaches of foreign embassies accredited in Azerbaijan have been immediately informed on the fact of usage of such weapon by Armenia against the Azerbaijani civilians. This case was observed and well documented on May 11 2016, during the visit to Askipara village of 20 representatives and military attachés from 13 countries, as well as field assistants of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference.

The investigation has revealed that ammunition, which was fired by the armed forces of Armenia, is a D-4 type (smoke bomb) 122 mm artillery shell. It weights 27.07 kg and contains 3.6 kg of P4 (the chemical code of white phosphorus).

Special Investigation Unit of the Republic of Azerbaijan Military Prosecutor's Office inspected the territory where the shell was found. The Republic of Azerbaijan Military Prosecutor's Office has initiated a criminal case upon this fact under the following articles of Azerbaijan's Criminal Code: Article 29.120.2.7 (attempt to kill two or more people), 29.120.2.12 (attempt to kill on ethnic, racial or religious grounds) and 116.0.16 (use of weapons, means and methods of warfare prohibited by interstate agreements during an armed conflict). A preliminary investigation into the fact is underway in the Republic of Azerbaijan Military Prosecutor's Office.

Witness accounts, photos of the case, video footage from the defuse of the shell (explosion emitted a dense white smoke) (please, view the video link http://mod.gov.az/index2.php?content=news/2016/20160511 attasecebhe), as well as trajectory of fire presents numerous evidence that the shell which belonged to Armenia is a white phosphorus bomb and fired from the nearby positions of the armed forces of Armenia.

It is well known that weapons containing white phosphorus are extremely toxic when inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through burned areas and can have severe negative impacts on human health. Such weapons cause severe, partial to full-thickness thermal and chemical burns upon contact with skin, often down to the bone. Absorbed through the skin white phosphorus can survive long enough in the human body to damage the heart, kidney or liver, leading to multiple organ failure or death.

Consonant with general international humanitarian law, attacks on civilians or civilian objects as are attacks on forests or other kinds of plant cover (like cultivated area in Askipara village) with White Phosphorus shells are prohibited under the Protocol III on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons of the United Nations Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW or CCWC) of 1980.

Armenia with the intentional strike at civilian objects of Azerbaijan using high-explosive white phosphorous grossly violates its obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, such as 1949 Geneva Conventions, and in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Weapons containing white phosphorus can also qualify as 'incendiary weapon or device' under the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings which Armenia acceded in 2004. The Convention applies to any 'explosive or incendiary weapon or device that is designed, or has the capability, to cause death, serious bodily injury or substantial material damage' or a weapon that has these effects through toxic chemicals, biological agents, toxins, or radiation.

Alongside the Republic of Armenia's responsibility as a State for internationally wrongful acts, violations by Armenia of international humanitarian and human rights law during the conflict amount to crimes under international criminal law.

The Republic of Azerbaijan urges the international community to condemn Armenia for such blatant violations of international law.

White phosphorus bomb shelled by the armed forces of Armenia against civilians and civilian objects of Azerbaijan

Type: D-4 White Phosphorus shell

Detonating fuse: RGM-2

Color: Khaki or gray

Case: Metallic

Assignment: Smoke shell

Composition: 3.6 kg of P-4 (chemical code) white or yellow phosphorus

Weight of the explosive: 0.145 kg TNT (trotyl)

Caliber: 122 mm

Length: 496.6 mm

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Letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith information on further violations of international humanitarian law by Armenia in the context of the intensification of the armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan since 2 April 2016.

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(*Signed*) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

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1612657

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Comments dated 1 June 2016 by Hikmet Hajiyev, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in response to the media question on illegal economic activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

The Republic of Armenia bears the responsibility for unleashing the war and using force against Azerbaijan, occupying its territories, carrying out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale and committing other serious crimes. Armenia established subordinate separatist entity in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other regions of Azerbaijan.

Despite the ongoing negotiations towards the solution of the conflict based on the principles of international law and the UN Security Council Resolutions 822(1993), 853(1993), 874(1993) and 884 (1993) the policy and practice of Armenia in the occupied territories, including installation of artificial settlements by transferring people from abroad into those areas, destruction of cultural heritage of Azerbaijani people and altering their origin, illegal commercial activities and preventing the Azerbaijani internally displaced population from returning to their homes testify to the intention of Armenia to secure the annexation of these territories.

The international law prohibits the acquisition of territory or altering the internationally recognized borders of States by use of force. Under the international law the situation created by a serious breach of peremptory norms of international law shall not be recognized as lawful. The Republic of Azerbaijan is the only country possessing the internationally recognized sovereignty over its occupied territories. Like any the military occupation, the occupation of Azerbaijan's territories is temporary as well.

In flagrant violation of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and sovereignty, it's appropriate laws and the norms and principles of international law, individuals or companies in transactions with Armenia, its organs, natural and legal persons as well as with its subordinate separatist regime in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan run risk of facing appropriate legal proceedings, including in the form of administrative or criminal prosecution. Under international law such activities in the occupied territories may be qualified as war crimes that entail criminal liability.

Additionally, the natural and legal persons also in breach of corporate social responsibility and business ethics code, contribute to the continuation of Armenia's occupation against Azerbaijan and violation of fundamental rights, including rights of return and rights of property of million more Azerbaijani internally displaced persons who were subject of ethnic cleansing.

The General Prosecutor Office has filed a criminal case against Vartan Sirmakes, the national of Swiss Confederation, co-founder of "Franck Muller Group" and CEO for his illegal economic and other activities in the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by the armed forces of Armenia. In the meantime, the criminal proceedings have been taken in relation to German Sterligov, citizen of Russian Federation for his illegal actions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The necessary operative-investigative actions are being continued in this regard.

The illegal economic activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are also put into the agenda of joint Governmental Commissions and are subject of discussions with the appropriate States.

In accordance with their obligations under the international law all States shall do all necessary to refrain their natural and legal persons from unlawful visits to and other activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and prohibit export of any products produced in these areas to their markets.

As a result of preventive actions and rising of awareness about legal consequences, the activities of many foreign companies have been ceased in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other regions of Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan will continue to take all legal and political measures at the national and international levels to prevent such illegal activities in its occupied sovereign territories.

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Letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Baku Declaration of the seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held from 25 to 27 April 2016, in Baku.

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(Signed) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

GE.16-12661(E)

1612661

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 24 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

The seventh global forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations living together in inclusive societies: a challenge and a goal, 25-27 April 2016, Baku, Azerbaijan

We, the Heads of State and Government and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of States belonging to the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC);

Together with the Director Generals and other Heads of Delegation of international organizations also belonging to the Group of Friends of UNAOC;

On the occasion of the Seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, 25-27 April 2016, which included a Youth Event as well as networking sessions organized by UNAOC partners;

Reaffirming our commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Also reaffirming our commitment to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as other relevant international instruments such as the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity;

Acknowledging the United Nations General Assembly Resolutions A/RES/64/14 of 10 November 2009 and A/RES/69/312 of 6 July 2015, adopted by consensus, which recognize and welcome the efforts of UNAOC, express support for its practical projects, and provide UNAOC with the political guidance necessary to pursue its work in promoting intercultural dialogue, understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs, and acknowledging further the guiding principles of the Alliance outlined in the report of the High-Level Group for the Alliance of Civilizations of 13 November 2006;

Stressing the importance of respect and understanding for cultural and religious diversity, of moderation as a value within societies; and encouraging tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples to expand their activities promoting a culture of peace, and to ensure that peace and non-violence are fostered at the national, subregional, regional and international levels;

Encouraging UNAOC to continue to promote moderation as a universal value for attainment of peace, security and development;

Convinced that the world's cultural diversity, as well as cultural heritage, is a wealth to be cherished and sustained by all as a factor of peace and development among all nations;

Expressing concern about the increasing frequency and scale of acts of unlawful destruction of cultural heritage; and stressing the importance of respecting and safeguarding cultural heritage in order to promote peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development;

Recognizing the importance of intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation in order to promote tolerance, pluralism and mutual respect and expressing its support for the diverse initiatives taken by governments, international organizations and civil society in this regard;

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recognizing the importance of its goals and targets, including, inter alia, on promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies, for sustainable development;

Acknowledging the importance of the role of the Marrakesh Declaration adopted in January 2016, on religious minorities in predominantly Muslim majority countries;

Recalling the United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/53/22 of 4 November 1998, which declared 2001 the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations and expressed its firm determination to facilitate and promote dialogue among civilizations;

Alarmed by the acts of intolerance, violent extremism, violence, including sectarian violence, and terrorism in various parts of the world, which claim innocent lives, cause destruction and displace people, and rejecting the use of violence, regardless of any motivation;

Reaffirming the commitment made by all Member States under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction, and reaffirming also that Member States are under the obligation to protect and respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons;

Recognizing UNAOC's important role in addressing the increasing distrust and polarization between and among communities caused by the fear of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism;

Recognizing also UNAOC's relevant role in raising awareness of the importance of addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, while respecting their human rights, safety and cultural diversity;

Recognizing also in this regard the value added by such UNAOC initiatives as the UNAOC Fellowship Program, Entrepreneurs for Social Change (E4SC), Intercultural Leaders, the Intercultural Innovation Award, PLURAL+, Media and Information Literacy, PEACEapp, UNAOC Summer School, the Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF), and the UNAOC Hate Speech Initiative;

Welcoming the initiative of the Secretary-General on preventing violent extremism and taking note in this regard of his Plan of Action aimed at addressing the drivers of violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism; and encouraging the UNAOC's contribution through relevant activities in the areas of media, migration, education, and youth in collaboration with other United Nations entities, intergovernmental organizations and civil society;

Noting the important role that youth can play in preventing violent extremism– violent extremism that can be conducive to terrorism– and the need to promote youth's participation and empowerment to that end;

Emphasizing our common determination to combat the scourges of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including incitement to violence based on hatred, in all their forms and manifestations for the goal of living together in inclusive societies;

Reaffirming that the dialogue among civilizations can play an important role in the promotion of common grounds among civilizations, recognition and promotion of the inherent dignity and of the equal rights of all human beings and, in this way, it can assist in dispelling notions of cultural superiority, and facilitate the building of a reconciled world for the human family;

Stressing the importance of creating synergy among the Istanbul Process, Rabat Plan of Action, Fez Action Plan, and taking into consideration the Marrakesh Declaration in this regard;

Reaffirming that there is no justification for violent extremism, whatever the motivation, and that, violent extremism, in all its forms and manifestations cannot and should not be associated with any religion, race, nationality, civilization or ethnic group;

Taking into account that a culture of peace actively fosters non-violence and respect for human rights and strengthens solidarity among peoples and nations and dialogue between cultures;

Recognizing in each culture a dignity and value that deserve recognition, respect and preservation, convinced that, in their rich variety and diversity and in the reciprocal influences that they exert on one another, all cultures form part of the common heritage belonging to all humankind;

Recognizing further that the process of globalization constitutes a powerful and dynamic force which should benefit the development and prosperity of all countries, without exclusion; noting that while globalization offers great opportunities, its benefits can be very unevenly shared, and its costs unevenly distributed; expressing our determination to prevent and mitigate the negative effects of globalization; noting that these effects could aggravate, inter alia, poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion, cultural homogenization and economic disparities; further expressing our determination to maximize the benefits of globalization through, inter alia, the strengthening and enhancement of international cooperation to increase opportunities for trade, economic growth and sustainable development, global communications through the use of new technologies and increased intercultural exchange through the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, which can contribute to the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;

Emphasizing the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as women's full, equal and effective participation in decision-making processes, for the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, sustainable development and peaceful and inclusive societies;

Acknowledging that tourism can enhance mutual respect, understanding and tolerance among nations by creating links between visitors and host communities that promote intercultural understanding, fight stereotypes, and contribute to a culture of peace;

Recognizing that information and communications technologies are fundamentally altering the way individuals and communities interact, consume and spend their time, with new and unforeseen health and social consequences, many of which are positive and some of which raise concerns;

Appreciating the leadership and contributions of the members of the Group of Friends;

Expressing appreciation to previous host countries of UNAOC Global Forums: to Spain for The First Global Forum, (Madrid, January 2008); to Turkey, for the Second Global Forum, (Istanbul, April 2009); to Brazil for the Third Global Forum, (Rio, May 2010); to Qatar for the Fourth Global Forum, (Doha, December 2011); to Austria for the

Fifth Global Forum, (Vienna, February 2013), and to Indonesia for the Sixth Global Forum, (Bali, August 2014);

Reaffirming our support for UNAOC and its High Representative;

Welcoming the continuing efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General and the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to strengthen the relationships between UNAOC and United Nations agencies, departments and other bodies;

Recognizing the role of UNESCO in intercultural dialogue and its contribution to interreligious dialogue, as well as its activities relating to the culture of peace and non-violence and its focus on concrete actions at the global, regional and subregional levels;

Acknowledging initiatives that seek to enable, empower and encourage dialogue among followers of different religions and cultures around the world, such as the Alliance of Civilizations Institute in Istanbul, Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Vienna, the Istanbul Process on the implementation of HRC Resolution 16/18, Baku process, including the World Forum on Inter-Cultural Dialogue held in Baku 2011, 2013 and 2015 under

UNGA Resolution 62/90, the Rabat Plan of Action elaborated under the auspices of the OHCHR, as well as the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures in Alexandria, the World Nomad Games in Kyrgyzstan, the South East Europe Forum of the Dialogue among Civilizations and the World Conference on Inter-Faith and Inter-Civilization Dialogue in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and other related initiatives and activities;

Acknowledging the efforts made by the High Representative to focus the Alliance's mission and actions to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, seen in the many sessions at this Forum that focus on these critical tasks;

Acknowledging the importance of leaving no one behind in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as a way to counter marginalization;

Expressing appreciation to the regional and sub-regional organizations, which are members of the Group of Friends of UNAOC, and are carrying out activities in line with the objectives of UNAOC in regard to its four pillars;

Praising Azerbaijan, as the host country of the 7th Global Forum of the Alliance, for focusing the Baku Forum on the theme "Living Together In Inclusive Societies: A Challenge and A Goal," as a way to harness the multiple perspectives of various sectors to meet the challenge of, and progress towards, inclusive living in today's increasingly diverse societies, and taking note of national initiatives in this regard, including the declaration of 2016 as the Year of Multiculturalism in Azerbaijan;

1. Welcome the new members of the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations;

2. Acknowledge with gratitude the significance of the continued financial commitments made by the Group of Friends, as well as other forms of support, stress the ongoing need for the timely and regular replenishment of the UNAOC Voluntary Trust Fund, and encourage the members of Group of Friends to consider making longer term pledges to ensure predictability of funds;

3. Acknowledge the leadership and contributions of Spain and Turkey as the Co-Sponsors of the Alliance of Civilizations.

4. Recognize the importance of strengthening the UNAOC's four pillars, namely, Youth, Education, Media, and Migration to prevent violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism;

5. Welcome the adoption by consensus of resolution 70/109 of the United Nations General Assembly on "A World against Violence and Violent Extremism" (short for WAVE), which, inter alia, urges all Member States to unite against violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations as well as sectarian violence; and underlines that States, regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, religious bodies and the media have an important role to play in promoting tolerance and respect for religious and cultural diversity;

6. Reaffirm its political commitment to the four pillars of activity of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, mainly, youth, education, media and migration, acknowledges the work done in those areas, emphasizes its constructive role in promoting the values of conflict prevention, mediation and reconciliation, and encourages the Alliance to continue its work through a number of projects, in collaboration with governments, international organizations, foundations and civil society groups, as well as media;

7. Commend the High Representative's efforts to incorporate arts, entertainment and sports programming as human expressions of intercultural bridge-building;

8. Commend the international initiatives, including those by UNESCO, designed to promote the safeguarding of cultural heritage in time of peace and in the event of armed conflicts, and encourage the members of the Group of Friends to condemn the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage;

9. Underline the positive impact that migration can have on countries of origin and destination, including through promoting cultural pluralism;

10. Encourage governments, international organizations and all other relevant stakeholders to consider tourism's contribution to the promotion of peace;

11. Recognize that respect for the cultural diversity and cultural rights of all enhances cultural pluralism, contributing to a wider exchange of knowledge and understanding of cultural background, advancing the application and enjoyment of human rights throughout the world, and fostering stable, friendly relations among peoples and nations worldwide;

12. Affirm, in the context of a world which increasingly receives its information from the Internet and where the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online, the important place of online media and the Internet as a key element of UNAOC activities to build bridges and counter polarization;

13. Express deep concern about the use of new information technologies, such as the Internet, for purposes contrary to respect for human values, equality, non discrimination, respect for others and tolerance, including to propagate racism, racial hatred, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance, and that, in particular, children and youth having access to this material could be negatively influenced by it;

14. Recall paragraphs 90 and 91 of the Durban Declaration relating to the use of information technologies, freedom of expression and the positive and negative impacts such technologies can have, including with respect to human values, equality, non-discrimination, respect for others, tolerance, including efforts to combat the propagation of racism, racial and religious hatred, xenophobia, racial discrimination and related intolerance;

15. Support the High Representative in his efforts to advance UNAOC programming as an instrument for addressing conditions conducive to the spread of violent

extremism and foster reconciliation, and trust across communities, to forge inclusive societies for sustainable development;

16. Condemn any advocacy of religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, whether it involves the use of print, audiovisual or electronic media or any other means;

17. Emphasize that freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and stresses the role that these rights can play in the fight against all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief;

18. Stress the importance of implementing UNAOC's goals at the national level through the implementation of action plans at country level with the active leadership of governments and participation of civil society;

19. Encourage members of the Group of Friends to continue developing, updating, and implementing national strategies, and further encourage them to strengthen their efforts to collectively develop and implement regional strategies to increase intercultural dialogue and cooperation as has been done in the Mediterranean, South Eastern Europe, the Arab World and Latin America, and acknowledging the opportunity created by the Baku Forum to open new avenues for cooperation in this regard;

20. Welcome the decision of the High Representative to mainstream the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda into UNAOC programming;

21. Underline the usefulness of the UNAOC Global Forums as platforms where international, regional and sub-regional organizations can share experiences and collaborate toward developing and implementing global and regional strategies for intercultural dialogue and cooperation in support of the UNAOC's fulfilment of its objectives;

22. Welcome the Forum's theme, "Living Together in Inclusive Societies: A Challenge and a Goal", in line with our efforts towards the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, particularly of Sustainable Development Goal 16, and recognize that inclusive development is one of the main concerns of all civilizations;

23. Take note of the intention of the High Representative to launch an Advisory Council that would include, inter alia, faith leaders, political leaders, thought leaders and corporate sector figures to provide guidance or recommendations to the High Representative;

24. Encourage UNAOC to further engage with religious leaders to provide them with opportunities for interfaith dialogue to promote tolerance, mutual respect and understanding, and reject violence;

25. Recognize the important contribution to the debates, here in Baku, given by youth and welcome their commitment to lead by example through involvement in UNAOC activities related to education, media and migration;

26. Recognize that UNAOC grows stronger through increased programmatic and financial reporting and through consultation with its Group of Friends; and stress the importance of the role of focal points in contributing to and guiding the work of UNAOC, and encourages a more proactive interaction between the Alliance and focal points;

27. Extend our gratitude to the Government and people of Azerbaijan, in particular to the city of Baku, for hosting the Seventh Global Forum, 25-27 April 2016;

28. Call for the implementation of the commitments made in Baku so that Governments, with the support of the civil society, can overcome challenges and move

forward towards the goals of living together in inclusive societies for sustainable development;

29. Express our conviction that the Baku Forum has achieved its main objective of highlighting UNAOC's role as a global platform for sharing best practices for living together in inclusive societies, as well as solutions, in this context, to challenges, such as the spread of violent extremism which could be conducive to terrorism, in order to promote peace, universal human rights and sustainable development.

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Letter dated 29 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the speech by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, held from 25 to 27 April 2016, in Baku.

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(Signed) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 29 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Speech by Ilham Aliyev at the official opening of 7th UNAOC Global Forum

Excellencies,

Presidents,

Dear friends, dear guests,

First of all, I'd like to welcome you all to our country. I am very glad to see you all in Azerbaijan. It is a big honor for us to host the 7th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. We consider this as a sign of appreciation of our activity and promotion of the values of intercultural dialogue, multiculturalism.

First of all, I'd like to express my gratitude to the founding fathers of the Alliance – Turkey and Spain, President Erdogan and Prime Minister Zapatero for this extremely important initiative, which now lives for more than 10 years. The idea of creation of the Alliance was a sign of wisdom of the politicians, my brother President Erdogan and Prime Minister Zapatero, and was supported by the international community.

I'd also like to express gratitude to the UN High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations Mr. Al-Nasser for his leadership and contribution to promotion of the values of peace, solidarity and friendship.

We are very proud that today representatives of more than 140 countries gathered in Baku to address important issues of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Azerbaijan for centuries was a place where religions, cultures, civilizations met. We are not only a geographic bridge between East and West, but also a cultural bridge. For centuries representatives of religions, cultures lived in peace and dignity in Azerbaijan. Religious tolerance, multiculturalism always was present here. There was no word "multiculturalism", but ideas were always present.

And the result of that is that today Azerbaijan is a multiethnic, multiconfessional country where representatives of all religions and ethnic groups live in dignity and peace. This is one of our biggest assets. And we are proud of our history. We are proud of our historical monuments which reflect the creation of representatives of different cultures.

One of the oldest mosques in the world, which was built in 743 is situated in the ancient Azerbaijani city of Shamakhi. Also one of the oldest churches in the Caucasus, the ancient church of ancient state of Caucasian Albania is also situated in Azerbaijan close to another ancient city of Shaki. Our government invests in construction and renovation of mosques, Orthodox and Catholic churches, synagogues. This is our policy and this is our lifestyle. For centuries Azerbaijan is preserving these assets regardless of political or social situation in our country. Our country is relatively young as an independent country - only 25 years old. But it is an ancient country with deep historical and cultural roots.

Multiculturalism for us is a state policy. We organized different events, addressing these important issues. Every second year the intercultural dialogue forum is taking place in Azerbaijan. We regularly host Baku International Humanitarian Forum. And the main idea

is how to bring representatives of different religions together and how to establish more understanding between us.

Azerbaijan hosted the World Summit of Religious Leaders addressing important issues of interreligious dialogue. I think that today this is one of the most important topics on the global agenda. And the role of Alliance of Civilizations is growing. Unfortunately, we see also very concerning trends in our region, in Europe, in Middle East, in the area of former Soviet Union, where we see clashes, confrontations based on ethnic or religious grounds. This is a very dangerous tendency.

And I think that the gathering in Baku, the 7th Global Forum, will address these issues and will contribute to the cause of solidarity, peace, mutual understanding and partnership.

In 2008, we initiated Baku Process, which already became a broad platform for intercultural dialogue. Azerbaijan is one of the few countries which are members of Islamic Cooperation Organization and of the Council of Europe. So, at the meeting of ministers of culture of Council of Europe, which took place in Baku in 2008, we invited ministers of culture of the countries of Islamic Cooperation Organization. For the first time ministers of culture of more than hundred countries of these two organizations gathered in Baku.

Next year, in 2009, we hosted a ministerial meeting of the ministers of culture of Islamic Cooperation Organization in Baku and invited ministers of culture of European countries. So, this process was named Baku Process, and we are very proud that the name of our ancient city is now also associated with this positive initiative. And this process in growing. It is getting more and more supporters, it is becoming a global initiative, which contributes to the cause of solidarity, mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. At the same time our initiatives are aimed at strengthening positions of our country as a bridge between cultures, between civilizations, as a country, which can and should contribute more to the cause of mutual understanding.

Last year we were very proud to host the first, inaugural European Games in Baku. Next year we will be hosting the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games in Baku. So in one city, in 2 years' time, European and Islamic athletes will perform. And this is not only sports, achievements and medals. This is friendship, this is mutual understanding, this is solidarity, partnership, and there is nothing to divide between us.

We are all living on the same planet. All the people want to live in dignity, in peace, in security, to raise children, to protect their families. All religions advocate for the same values of humanity, mercy, solidarity, peace. Uniting our efforts is what the world needs today. Today's gathering, today's Forum is a clear indicator that the ideas of multiculturalism are strongly supported by international community. As I said more than 140 countries are present here.

Multiculturalism has no alternative. Of course, we all know that there are different ideas. Some say that multiculturalism failed or didn't work. But there are positive examples. For us multiculturalism is a state policy and is our lifestyle.

What are the alternatives of multiculturalism? They are very dangerous alternatives – xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, racism, discrimination, hatred. Therefore, the strengthening of the values of multiculturalism will, I think, be a very positive trend in the current politics. And all the responsible politicians should contribute to these positive dynamics.

As I said, Azerbaijan is a relatively young country as an independent state. This year we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of restoration of our independence. These were the years of transformation of our political, economic system, these were the years of creation of the state. And, I think that we met all our major targets.

Azerbaijan became a respected member of international community, is a member of United Nations, OSCE, Islamic Cooperation Organization, Council of Europe, Non-Alignment Movement and many other international bodies.

We have strong international support, which was reflected in 2011, when with the support of 155 countries Azerbaijan for the first time was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. That was a big victory of our country and a sign of great respect for Azerbaijan.

Within this short period of 25 years we managed to present ourselves as a reliable international partner, as a country with independent foreign policy, a country which contributes to regional development, regional security, stability and multiculturalism. The years of independence were the years of transformation of our political system, creation of democratic institutions, and we succeeded in that. All the freedoms are provided in Azerbaijan, including freedom of media, free internet - more than 70% of our population are internet users - freedom of assembly, religious freedom. All freedoms are provided, and this is a good foundation for rapid economic development. And economic reforms implemented in Azerbaijan were implemented in parallel with political reforms.

Unfortunately, the creation of our statehood was dominated by military aggression of a neighboring Armenia against Azerbaijan, the aggression that ended in occupation of the internationally recognized territory of our country. Nagorno-Karabakh is a historic part of Azerbaijan, a legal part of Azerbaijan. When Azerbaijan became a member of United Nations, Nagorno-Karabakh was adopted as an integral part of our country. But as a result of this aggression Nagorno-Karabakh is totally occupied by Armenia. And not only Nagorno-Karabakh, but seven other districts of Azerbaijan beyond the administrative borders of Nagorno-Karabakh are under occupation. As a result of that occupation we have more than one million refugees and IDPs. So we were the subject of ethnic cleansing by Armenia. Almost 20% of our territory is under occupation for more than 20 years.

Everything on the occupied territories is destroyed, and OSCE sent two fact-finding missions to observe the situation and their report is terrifying. Everything is destroyed – all our buildings, historic monuments, mosques, graves. Here in Baku, in the center of the city, you can see how we preserve the religious heritage of Armenian people. The Armenian church was restored and is situated where it was built. But all our mosques on the occupied territories lie in ruins.

International community adopted resolutions and decisions in order to put an end to this occupation. United Nations Security Council – the highest international body – adopted four resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories. Unfortunately, Armenia simply ignores these resolutions, and doesn't implement them. And here we come to a very important point of the mechanism of implementation of decisions and resolutions of international organizations. In some cases, resolutions of Security Council are being implemented within days, if not hours. But in our case it is more than 20 years and it is still unresolved.

OSCE, Islamic Cooperation Organization, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Non-Alignment Movement – all of them adopted similar resolutions demanding withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territory. But Armenia simply ignores them, and there is no international pressure to force the aggressor to comply with international norms.

Our people were subject of genocide. Khojaly genocide is recognized by 10 countries. As a result of that genocide hundreds of Azerbaijanis were killed, all of them civilians, and almost 200 of them women and children. This is a crime against humanity, and this once again shows what a danger we are facing now.

The resolution of the conflict between Armenia-Azerbaijan must be based on the international law norms, United Nations Charter, Security Council s resolutions, Helsinki Final Act. Our territories must be liberated, our people must have a chance to go back to their homes.

In the beginning of the 1990s we faced a major humanitarian catastrophe. Because we had 250,000 Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia. And more than 700,000 internally displaced persons from Nagorno-Karabakh and other areas. At that time population of Azerbaijan was less than 8 million. So we had probably one of the highest per capita numbers of refugees and IDPs.

And we know how difficult it is to accommodate them, to provide decent conditions for them. Especially, at that time, we were completely without any resources. We were at that time one of the poorest countries in the world with a living standard below any level of poverty. Of course, we got some international support, but we mainly coped with this issue ourselves.

Despite of the fact that we built 90 settlements and every year we resettle more than 20,000 refugees and IDPs, still some of them live in difficult conditions, in dormitories, in schools, in kindergartens. And we are trying to do all our best to improve their living standard, but it takes a lot of time. So we clearly understand the situation, which countries now face with respect to refugees. This is a real humanitarian catastrophe, and all international community should take part in the resolution of these issues. And the countries, which receive most of the refugees, now need to be supported. Not only by words, but very serious financial contribution. As a country which suffered and continues to suffer from occupation, we know how difficult it is from all point of views, from political, moral, economic and social points of view.

Despite occupation our country develops. We had one of the fastest economic growth rates in the world in the decade from 2004 to 2014. We dramatically reduced poverty from almost 50% to 5%. Unemployment also is around 5%. We invest in education. Level of literacy in Azerbaijan is close to 100%. More than 3000 schools were built and renovated in the recent years. More than 500 hospitals were constructed all over the country. It allowed us to reduce significantly the child mortality. Gender equality is fully protected in Azerbaijan. Women have a right to vote in Azerbaijan for almost 100 years since the creation of the first Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918. By the way, that was a first Democratic Republic in the Muslim world.

We invest in environmental protection, especially in Absheron Peninsula, which had a lot of polluted areas due to the oil exploration and development. We had to clean all that polluted areas and create parks and public areas there. In other words, we are making a very important progress with respect to United Nations Millennium Development goals, and we are on a right track. Even the economic crisis, which all the oil producing countries are facing now especially taking into account the reduction of oil price, did not seriously affect our economy. And I am sure that we will be able to achieve all our major goals in 2016.

Azerbaijan is known as a country rich with energy resources. But our main objective is to transform "black gold", as we call oil, into human capital. Therefore, investment in education, social protection, reforms brought to the result that our economy is now diversified, and dependence on oil and gas is going down.

Though, of course, we initiated large-scale energy projects. The project of Southern Gas Corridor, which is a project of energy cooperation and energy security. Also we are an active member of the team of countries in promotion of the transportation corridor taking into account our geographical location. And if you look at the number of countries, I will name them, if you don t mind, just to demonstrate what kind of regional cooperation we have. It will be clear that these energy and transportation corridors are not only corridors

for energy and cargos. These are the corridors of partnership. Southern Gas Corridor members are Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Italy and also Balkan countries, I am sure will join at a later stage.

East-West corridor, Silk Route project was initiated by three countries – Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. And now it expands to Central Asia, China, and from Turkey to Europe. This will be a new Silk Route. And then North-South corridor, where Azerbaijan is also an active participant. Here we have countries of Northern Europe, Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan and India.

These are projects of partnership because all these countries have become interrelated. And if you are interrelated, if you are interdependent on each other then you have more predictability, stability, security and cooperation. Creation of this format of international cooperation is based on economic interests, like energy security and transportation, is based on sharing the same values of how to overcome the difficulties, how to create better conditions for our people. And as a foundation of all that our common values of religious tolerance, mutual understanding, multiculturalism will make the life of the people of our region better.

Once again I would like to express my gratitude to all our guests, who are together with us today. Thank you for being with us at this important event.

I'd like to wish the Forum success. Thank you very much.

United Nations A/HRC/32/G/21

General Assembly

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Human Rights Council
Thirty-second session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Letter dated 29 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the speech by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the World Humanitarian Summit, held on 23 and 24 May 2016, in Istanbul, Turkey.

I would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 4.

(Signed) Vaqif Sadiqov

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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1612664

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 29 June 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

Speech by Ilham Aliyev at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul

Mr. Chairman, Madam Chair, ladies and gentleman.

I believe that the results of the summit will contribute to the improvement of the living standards of the people who suffer from humanitarian crisis.

We Azerbaijanis know very good what it is like to be refugees and internally displaced persons. As a result of Armenian aggression, 20 per cent of our internationally recognized territories is under occupation, more than one million of Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced persons.

Armenia committed ethnic cleansing and genocide against Azerbaijanis. Khojaly genocide committed by Armenia in 1992 is recognized by more than 10 countries. As a result of Khojaly genocide 613 civilians were brutally killed, among them 106 women, 63 children and 70 elderly. More than one thousand people are missing. Armenia continues its policy of aggression against Azerbaijan.

In April 2016, Armenia launched new attack on peaceful Azerbaijani citizens. As a result of this attack our soldiers and officers, as well as six civilians were killed. More than 30 civilians were wounded. As a result of the shelling of our citizens and villages more than 500 houses were damaged, more than 100 houses were completely destroyed and burned. Armenian army used prohibited chemical weapons against civilians, particularly white phosphorus bomb.

All the war crimes committed by Armenia are documented and presented to international monitors. In order to protect our civilian population Azerbaijani army conducted successful counter-attack and only after that aggressor was stopped. Armenia ignores four United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the territory of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh and seven other districts of Azerbaijan are occupied. In some cases United Nations Security Council resolutions are implemented within days if not hours. But in our case they remained on paper for more than twenty years. This is a policy of double standards towards Azerbaijan. Armenia must implement these resolutions or be sanctioned. Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be restored.

Another serious threat to the whole region is an outdated Armenian nuclear power plant in Metsamor. There is information that Armenia is illegally using the radioactive waste. Former prime minister, member of parliament and other officials of Armenia declared this April that Armenia has a nuclear weapon, so-called dirty bomb. This statement must be thoroughly examined by corresponding international organizations. Armenian nuclear threat and blackmail must be stopped. Azerbaijan does its best to overcome the consequences of humanitarian catastrophe caused by Armenia.

More than six billion dollars were spent to improve living conditions of our refugees and IDPs. The level of poverty among refugees and IDPs dropped from 75 to 12 per cent. In general, poverty level in Azerbaijan dropped from almost 50 to 5 percent in the last 12 years. Azerbaijan provides and will continue to provide assistance to countries suffering from similar problems. We provided financial assistance to support United Nations Ebola

response and recovery actions. We are also committed to promoting cooperation among relevant institutions and stakeholders for ensuring access of population to early warning system and disaster-risk information.

Thank you.

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Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 8 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and has the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued on 7 July 2016 concerning the sanctions of the United States of America over "human rights issues" (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also has the honour to request that the present note verbale and the annex thereto* be circulated as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council.

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 8 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Statement of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued on 7 July 2016 concerning the U.S. sanctions over "human rights issue"

The U.S. committed unheard-of most hideous hostility toward the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The U.S. dared pull up the supreme leadership of the DPRK on 6 July when announcing its State Department's report on the latter's "human rights issue", a report peppered with lies and fabrications, and the list of targets of special sanctions by its Treasury Department, pursuant to the report.

What the U.S. did this time, not content with malignantly slandering the DPRK, is the worst crime that can never be pardoned.

The U.S., being hurry-scurry with the rapid development of the DPRK's nuclear deterrence including through the latter's complete successes in first hydrogen bomb test, the underwater test-fire of strategic submarine ballistic missile and the test-fire of surface to surface medium long-range strategic ballistic rocket, has been resorting to desperate efforts to impose all-out "sanctions and pressure" upon the DPRK.

That the U.S., having been pushed into an inferior position in the political and military confrontation with the DPRK, behaves most heinously by daring hurt the supreme dignity of the DPRK while finding fault with "human rights issues" shows by itself the pitiful status of the U.S. who has been plunged into panic and horror as the absolute prestige of DPRK supreme leadership is evermore growing.

However we can never overlook the maneuvers of the U.S. who runs amuck recklessly to recover from its severe defeat.

The supreme leadership of the DPRK its servicepersons and people have safeguarded at the cost of their lives while following with all sincerity represents the dignity and sovereignty of the DPRK and the destiny of all its service personnel and people.

But, the U.S. dared challenge the dignity of the DPRK supreme leadership, an act reminiscent of a new-born puppy knowing no fear of a tiger. This is the worst hostility and an open declaration of war against the DPRK as it has gone far beyond the confrontation over the "human rights issue."

While frantically conducting war exercises against the DPRK and enhancing military build up, the U.S. is stepping up on full scale preparations for war of aggression along with mean attack and accusation against our supreme leadership.

Although the U.S. openly conducted nefarious "beheading operation" aimed at hurting our supreme leadership and is now engaged in mean political plot, it will only bring about opposite result of accelerating the destruction of the U.S. far from startling anyone.

Now that the U.S. has passed over the "red line" in the overall showdown with the DPRK by perpetrating such thrice-cursed crime, the DPRK came to have the legitimate rights to take all necessary countermeasures.

To cope with the prevailing critical situation, the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK states as follows:

Firstly, the U.S. should immediately and unconditionally retract the recent step for sanctions which dared hurt the dignity of the DPRK supreme leadership.

Secondly, every lever and channel for diplomatic contact between the DPRK and the U.S. will be cut off at once in case the U.S. refuses to accept our demand. From now that the U.S. declared a war on the DPRK, any problem arising in the relations with the U.S. will be handled under the latter's wartime law.

Thirdly, the DPRK will take the toughest countermeasures to resolutely shatter the hostility of the U.S. as regards the fact that the latter's hostile policy has reached the worst phase of hurting the dignity of the former's supreme leadership.

The U.S. ruling quarters will have to bitterly experience how foolish and reckless such deed was.

United Nations A/HRC/32/G/23

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Human Rights Council
Thirty-second session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Note verbale dated 1 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other international organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and has the honour to provide herewith the comments of the Government of Greece on the written statement submitted by the "Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status (A/HRC/32/NGO/74), submitted to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-second session under agenda item 3 (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Greece kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the present note verbale and the annex thereto* as a document of the thirty-second session of the Human Rights Council under agenda item 3.

* Circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 1 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Submission by the Permanent Mission of Greece, on the Muslim Minority in Thrace and Freedom of Association, HRC 32, 1 July 2016

Greece attaches great importance to implementing coherent, comprehensive, and effective policies that guarantee, inter alia, equality before the law, respect for human rights religious freedoms and equality of opportunities for all. The same principles and goals apply with reference to the protection of and full respect for the rights of Greek citizens members of the Muslim minority in Thrace. With regard to question of "ethnic self-identification" of the minority, we recall our standing position on the free individual self-identification. Moreover, the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne established the status of the Muslim minority in Thrace/ Greece identifying it on the basis of the only common denominator i.e the Muslim faith of the three -otherwise distinct- groups (Greek citizens of Turkish, Pomak and Roma origin) that comprise it. Each of these groups has its own language and cultural traditions/heritage.

With regard to the link between self-identification and the freedom of assembly and association, we would like to underline that over 50 associations which are active among minority members, have been legally registered by the relevant Courts since 2008. The Greek Justice fully complies with the acquis of the European Convention on Human Rights and other international instruments, under the rule of law.

With regard to the references of the shutdown of two "minority associations' annexes" in Komotini, we stress that there were not "annexes", but informal kindergartens, which were operating illegally, housing activities for children of preschool age, with the cover of the activities of that specific minority association and under its auspices. The operation of those kindergartens, which had not applied for a legal permission from the competent authorities, on the one hand goes against the principle of legality. On the other hand, it has put at risk the physical integrity of the children, since there were no guarantees for the rules of establishment, operation and implementation of all appropriate security measures. Although the objective of the Court's decision has been the implementation of the Law and the provision of the appropriate operation measures, the NGO so-called "Federation of Western Thrace Turks in Europe" attempts to present this issue as a violation of minority rights, thus distorting the true facts.

We would also like to highlight that according to the journalist Mr. Dede, correspondent of the minority newspaper "Trakyanin Sesi", those annexes "were justifiably shut down since there was no official permission".